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SUBJECT: TALKING POINTS ON UNGA ISSUES

REF: STATE 168341

¶1. (SBU) In a meeting on October 13, Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs for United Nations and International Organizations Aladin Villacorte expressed appreciation to Pol/C for reftel positions. (Septel will discuss solid Philippine support for Guatemala's UNSC candidacy.) He expressed particular interest in recent developments on North Korea, which Pol/C described, while praising the strong statement of Philippine President Arroyo and Foreign Secretary Romulo, in his capacity as ASEAN Chair, against the

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North Korean nuclear test. On Israel/Palestine-Middle East issues, Villacorte admitted that the Philippine delegation in New York often followed the OIC. Pol/C underscored that the USG watched UNGA voting records very carefully and urged that the GRP delegation never be more than one vote apart from the U.S. delegation, i.e., whenever possible, abstain rather than vote against the U.S. delegation. Villacorte promised to take this advice into consideration.

¶2. (SBU) Villacorte also noted that Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN Baja was now apt to remain in place for the foreseeable future, due to domestic political opposition to the nomination of retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Davide as his replacement.

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